



Fred Hamilton
Councilmember, Town of Bluffton

Lifelong Bluffton resident Fred Hamilton was re-elected to Town Council in 2012 after a two-year hiatus from elected office. While absent from the ballot, Hamilton was still very involved in public service. As the chairman of the Town's Affordable Housing Committee, he helped spearhead Bluffton's most ambitious housing project, the Wharf Street Redevelopment Project.

Hamilton said he wanted working-class residents to be able to own a house in their hometown despite the cost of land nearly tripling in the last decade.

The Wharf Street Redevelopment Project transformed a street peppered with blighted, abandoned structures to a neighborhood of six coastal cottages.

Hamilton said this project was a major accomplishment for Bluffton because so many towns intend to create a sustainable, affordable housing project and Bluffton was successful.

"Bluffton accomplished what many municipalities say they want but never get around to implementing," Hamilton said. "Because of this project, the neighborhood is attracting more new homes and businesses when a few years ago, no one was moving there."

Hamilton cites a 2006 *Island Packet* article titled, "Optimistic Officials Say Bluffton Will Be Model For Affordable Housing." Back then the project had its critics, now this "optimistic" vision has been fulfilled.

The project has received two statewide awards from the Municipal Association of South Carolina and the South Carolina State Housing, Finance and Development Authority. Bluffton's awards have generated tours from other statewide political leaders so they can gather ideas about how to implement similar projects.

"It's a beautiful project," Hamilton said. "Bluffton has made a difference for its residents and potentially, in the future, our example may improve lives for others in the state."



Other issues important to Hamilton include providing water and sewer infrastructure to Bluffton's Buck Island and Simmonsville Road neighborhoods. Hamilton said while this project is accomplished as resources are available, it is a quality of life issue for residents and an environmental protection issue for the May River.

Hamilton was also a strong supporter of the renovations and additions to DuBois Park, Oyster Factory Park and the Streetscape Project which enhanced Old Town with on-street parking, sidewalks, lighting, trees and the installation of benches and trashcans.

Hamilton was first elected in 2005 to complete the term of his late cousin, Oscar Frazier, and was re-elected in 2008. His latest term was only three years due to the Council voting to implement odd-year municipal elections. He served as Mayor Pro Temp for five of his six years in office.

Professionally, Hamilton works in car sales. Civically, he is involved in athletics, especially baseball. He was also instrumental in building a covered basketball court on Goethe Road.

Hamilton said his family has been in public service for decades and he wants more residents to know the Town has an open-door policy. He said his most important public duty is to be the eyes and the voice of those whom he serves.

Hamilton is also an Army veteran and has held numerous positions with Town commissions, committees, civic organizations and his church, Campbell Chapel AME Church.